

HAFIZ

I

WHEN Hafiz sang in Samarcand,
Through tender twilights, sweet with balm,
Trooped star-eyed youths and maids to hear,
And woo 'neath citron-tree and palm
The nightingales were awed and mute;
Peace brooded over all the skies;
And sweeter than a magic lute
His glad notes rang, or broke in sighs.
The spell of love was on the land
When Hafiz sang in Samarcand.

II

Where Hafiz sleeps by bastioned walls
The poppies set the fields in flame;
White asphodels above his breast
Speak silently his sacred name.
In rose-wreathed bowers rough songs are heard,
And ribald laughter over wine;
A ruffian slays, for one mad word,
His rival at a wanton's shrine.
Then in the dusk sad silence falls
Where Hafiz sleeps by bastioned walls.

ARTHUR GRISSOM.

A NATION TO BLAME.

IF you will take your time when you walk up Smoky Row, in the town of Bokoto, Choctaw Nation, you will see to your right, three doors west of the Arkansas Store, a sign which reads, "The Green Hole."

You can enter the first room, were you the devil himself, and after the "lookout" has regarded you through the peep-hole, you can enter the Green Hole proper, unless you are Tom Polk.

I am Jack Moist, gambler. I run the squarest poker house in Bokoto. But Bokoto is a tough town, and the Green Hole is a tough place, and we fellows who finger the pasteboards day and night the year round are tough men, the way the world goes. The Green Hole is a 16x20 room, painted the color of mesquite grass, and in it are two tables at which the boys play poker. Silver, Bar Dick deals the cards at yonder table, and I deal them at this table upon which I now write these words. Each of us has a Winchester lying at his side, because one of these days Deputy Marshal Tom Polk will break my door in, and then these things will come in handy. There's only one man on earth who would break my door in — Tom Polk — and after one or both, or all three, have kicked the bucket, there wont be any blame attached. It's his business to break in doors, and it's Silver Dick's occupation and mine to kill the man who does it — and that's all there is to it.

This story is about Roy Winter — may the Lord have mercy on his soul. He came out to Bokoto sixteen months ago from Boston. Born at the Hub was he and buried in the dirt that clings to the tire. He came out here to help sustain the family reputation. It is good for a family's reputation for some members to stay at home, and good for it for some to go away, and Roy was one of the kind that could help most by going where reputations do n't count for much. I do n't think he wanted to come out here, but the rest of the family outvoted him.

Winter was a gentleman by blood and birth. I know, because I was one once — a long time ago! — but this

story is n't about me. He was that kind of a man whose walk, when he entered, said, "I am somebody." I was glad when he came to the Green Hole, because such men are playing against time, and not for the bread and meat in it. I'll not forget his looks soon. His looks *were* looks. His eyes were clear for all the red in the whites; his mouth was strong, though drooping a little at the corners, and he was good seventy-three inches, tall and straight as a new bank clerk's accounts.

He soon became the best customer the Green Hole had. He almost lived with us, and I came to expect him to help me settle Tom Polk when that thing had to be done. He was a nervy boy if he was from Boston, and I liked him as much as one gambler ever likes another. He never kicked when the game went against him. I do n't think he cared, because, back in a very fine house in a tony part of Boston was a swell old duck of a father, who was willing to put up so long as the son stayed here and made no noise. I saw the old man's photograph, and also photographs of some sisters, and I tell you when I looked at them and remembered what there was for a man to live for back in the States, I felt almost like nailing up the door of the Green Hole and going back to the town where I used to know better things. But that was a weakness.

Ah! the games we used to have! We do n't have such games now. A man has no chance the way Congress does these times. The smoke-blackened ceiling was the limit, and it has been bumped more than once. There was another regular customer of the Green Hole who belongs in this story. He was—and is yet, unless the devil has got him since he fled to the Comanche country—Yanda Luck. Yanda's mother was a full-blood Choctaw and his father was a white man—as

bad as they make them — and Yanda got a full share of his sire's bad blood. Yanda had thirty-seven thousand acres of the best black land on earth, under fence, and he lived on the rent white men paid him for it. Some of the rent went for fine clothes; some of it went for Texas whisky; some of it went to the kitty at the Green Hole, and some went to Yanda's Choctaw mother, for with all his faults he loved the dark-skinned woman who lived in the Push-ma-ta-ha woods.

Yanda and Winter were friends. The devil that was in the one was a good deal like the devil that was in the other. They played together; they practiced shooting together, and they got drunk together. They used to brag of their shooting, and I did n't like that, because I knew when they should choose each other for targets the Green Hole would lose one or two good customers.

Ten miles west of Bokoto lives a woman who is a half-blood, and her daughter, who is one-quarter Choctaw-Chickasaw and three-quarters white. The daughter's name is Luck. She bears that name because she is the wife of Yanda. In all of the five tribes there is no other woman with half the beauty that is hers; and not in New York city is there a woman with brighter wit or better education. The Nation paid for her schooling. She was educated in Baltimore, and she had the brains to absorb all that came her way. So, it's the Nation that is to blame for it all. A Nation ought not to give a woman culture and accomplishments and then bring her back to crab-grass prairie to marry a savage. The devil is sure to pay.

I was at the wedding. It was a grand affair in its peculiar way. In the dance which followed the ceremony there were full-bloods from the brush along the river, soldiers from the fort, gamblers and traders from

Bokoto, stockmen from the Big Plain — and the queen, who danced with her drunken husband. I watched her as she danced, and tried to read in her wonderful black eyes what thoughts were concealed behind them.

There was only one man there who knew what a round dance was, — Roy Winter, — and they waltzed together. It was the first time they had seen each other.

I do n't blame the woman, neither do I blame Winter. I blame the Choctaw Nation. It's wrong to educate a woman up to ambrosia and then condemn her to pork and beans. It is only human nature in her to desire the ambrosia when she sees it. That woman was n't fitted for a savage husband who was drunk ten tenths of his time, and who does n't know a comic opera from a five o'clock tea. She was made for a man like Winter.

One day Winter tossed a card into the air and Yanda put two holes through it with bullets from his six-shooter, before the card hit the saw-dust on the floor of the Green Hole. The card was the queen of hearts from a new pack, and I swore at the two for spoiling it. After Yanda left Winter said laughingly that he would make a new queen of hearts, and taking a pencil, he drew, on the blank card which came with the deck, the picture of a woman. When he had finished he put the pack containing the card into a drawer. Then I think he forgot all about it, for he had had too much of Denison whisky.

Bokoto is Choctaw for "dark gray." The town is on the bank of the blue river, and the tall trees shut out the sunlight, and the shade which sits on the city suggested the name. The dark gray settles on our hearts at times, and we long for the sunlight. It was on my heart that day. That day was the day on which Winter ceased forever to be a customer of the Green Hole.

We were playing poker — Winter, Yanda, Corporal Hurt, a Jew buyer of skins, and myself. The drink was dying in Yanda and he was in a bad humor. I looked for trouble ; it came.

There was a big pot, and the Jew called for a fresh deck. I took one from the drawer and dealt the hands. Then the betting began.

It was after the draw that I saw Winter hesitate for the first time. It puzzled me, and I watched his face closely. At last he took a long breath, shrugged his shoulders, and raised the bet. All dropped out except Yanda and Winter. They held *bands*. There was a little mountain of gold and silver and notes on the table.

"I call!" said Winter.

"Four tens!" said Yanda.

Winter put his cards down on the table.

"Four queens," he said, and one of the queens, the queen of hearts, was the one Winter had drawn with his pencil — and 'twas the fairest picture of Yanda's wife that ever was made of her.

There was a second's silence, and then Yanda sprang to his feet with the whitest face a half-breed ever had. He understood it all at last.

"God damn you," he cried : "get your pistol."

I blame not the woman : I blame not Winter : and who can blame Yanda ? The Choctaw Nation is responsible for the grave with the big tombstone on Dead Man's Hill. The Nation educated her, and then the Nation brought her back to the queer country where she had to choose between a life of bitter right and a life of sweet wrong.

The reputation of the Boston family is safe. Men are killed often in Bokoto, and no one takes the trouble to go

to Boston to tell the news. I wrote to the old man, and he shipped the headstone from Chicago.

Yanda is somewhere in the Comanche country with a price on his head.

The woman lives in a little hell of her own ten miles west.

I run the Green Hole — and it's the squarest joint in the Indian country — and it's the Nation that's to blame for it all.

W. DOUGLAS COLYAR.

MONOCHROME

SHUT fast again in beauty's sheath,
Where ancient forms renew,
The round world seems, above, beneath,
One wash of faintest blue.

And air and tide so stilly sweet
In nameless union lie;
The little far-off fishing fleet
Goes drifting up the sky.

Secure of neither misted coast,
Nor ocean undefined,
Our brooding sail is like the ghost
Of one that served mankind,

Who, sad in space, as we upon
This visionary sea,
Finds Labor and Allegiance done,
And Self begin to be.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.



AT THE ROOF GARDEN

DRAWN BY RAYMOND M. CROSBY

THE WARP AND THE WOOF

“For who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated Night,
Devoid of sense and motion?”

IN the early days of Golf in this country I spent a week with Tristram, who was at that time in the way of becoming a champion. That is to say, he was winning the club tournaments week after week, each victory making more and more sure his ultimate possession of a large and beautiful cup, of which the only drawback, as it turned out, was that you could n't drink out of it. That is, when you tried you were apt to be half drowned; in after years we called it the Cataract Cup.

While we were waiting for Tristram to win the cup, however, we used to content ourselves with less distinguished though more useful vessels. We would come home from a day's play at the club and after a late dinner would sit round in front of the fire, for it was along in the autumn, talking golf and drinking a drink called, I think, Tiger's-tail, a striped and comforting drink. We talked of other things too — sometimes even got far afield; but we always got back to golf — and when Mrs. Tristram had gone to bed and we were sitting over last and one more pipes and cigarettes, we seldom wandered far from it.

I cursed my mediocrity with some vindictiveness; for though not a very impartial critic of others, I am often quite keen in seeing how things stand with myself, which is a painful, though fortunately a rare gift. And although

I was only a beginner at the game, I already looked far, far into the future and could see myself still a duffer — other men beginning after me, gradually pulling up and passing me while I stayed persistently among the sixth-rates, or whatever you call those who are always in the state of being just no longer beginners. This prophetic view, to tell the truth, required in the case in point no extraordinary acuteness, for such has been my lot in every manly sport I have ever undertaken, and indeed in everything else. I could out-run or out-swim my boyish companions only so long as they were much younger than myself — when they got to my own age, I have had to come in second or third or next to the last. At football, baseball, rowing, I always pass from among the first candidates to the second teams. I was among the first to play tennis and saw man after man come up and pass me, while on the bicycle I never attained even respectability. All this had become very tiresome, and was indeed very bad for my nerve in any new form of athletics I took hold of.

“It is a bore, old man,” said Tristram, consolingly, “but then, why you know, you’re awfully good, considering — and of course, athletics are n’t just your best hold. A man can’t do everything nowadays. You can’t expect to be worth much in more than one or two things. You’ve got to content yourself with being first-rate in your own line; — you’re a scholar, you are, and a good one, too, you tell me.”

All this from Tristram was very commonplace and pointless, but I knew that it took him some time to limber out. In time he would say something better. He had really quite a rare disposition, Tristram, and until the moment that he picked up a golf-stick, he had done much in habituating himself to the regarding life in the spirit of

art. I don't mean that he had become cultivated in the ordinary sense, or that he lived in an atmosphere of fine books, fine pictures, fine music, or that he indulged in any special cult for Beauty. He had his own way of being devoted to art. His surroundings were no more artistic than his wife chose to have them, and he bore with equanimity the many charming follies with which her more effervescent likings encrusted their house. He read very little beside the best contemporary novels of our own tongue, not bothering himself at all about foreign celebrities, except by accident, and as to pictures, he was interested in modern developments, but seemed to think his chief duty to the graphic arts lay in collecting prints of seafights of the early part of the century, of which he had a considerable number. In fact he was not at all what you would call artistic; but although he knew little enough of art, he had a sure taste, and rarely took real pleasure in anything that was not good, and never took pleasure in what did not please him. He understood Meredith well enough but preferred Stevenson, approved of Raffaelli but liked Whistler better, and got much satisfaction out of Grieg, although he had been at Bayreuth twice. These things, however, were not essential to an artistic life as he regarded the matter. I believe he sometimes even scorned them a little, not in themselves, but in so far as they had become imposed on a conventional world as artistic necessities. The element of art in his life was so strong that it needed no accessories. In short he had been in the way of becoming a true artist of the finest sort, when the passion for golf swept him away from the peaceful path on which he stood, as so many other passions have swept men from so many other paths which seemed so good and so sure.

But now he played golf and was going to be one of the cracks. And now in the evening he drank Tiger's-tail, and looked at me with his beautiful brown eyes, saying plainly, though silently, "I have pawned my birthright for a mess of pottage," handling his pet mashie with which he made his best approach shots, and consoled my gloom at being a duffer at everything with a perfectly empty commonplace.

So I smiled at him. To tell the truth, we had n't seen much of each other for a couple of years. It would take him some time to limber out.

"Well," said he, after a pause, getting up and turning his back to the fire:

'I strove with none, for none were worth my strife.

Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art.

I warmed both hands before the fire of life.

It sinks and I am ready to depart.'

"Are you ready to depart?" he asked. "It's after twelve."

But I was not ready to depart, so he filled his pipe again.

"It's a good game," said he, "and you like to play it too. You would n't stay at home to-morrow, even though you knew to a moral certainty (as it is) that you'll be anything from five to ten points worse than you were to-day."

So we chatted on for a while and then went to bed, and as I am not great at moralizing, I went to sleep very quickly — even before I had thought out an interesting illustration of Sigwart's Theory of Impersonals, which happened to occur to me as I was undressing.

The next day it turned out as Tristram had predicted. It was tournament day and he came out ahead in his two rounds, with a score very near his best. I, on the other

hand, fozzled and topped even more than usual, turned my ball into a carnival of sardonic grins, and increased my score by five the first round and eleven the second. I did, however, make a few good strokes and especially one: with an old mashie of Tristram's that I was getting used to, I lifted the ball out of an awful bunch of long grass and dropped it dead on the green. That I overshot the hole afterwards and so took three more to get in, has not ruined the recollection of that stroke. Nor do I care that no one saw it but a condescending caddie.

It gives me a keen thrill to think of it even now. And other things of the sort sometimes happen. In the midst of a life which at times seems merely a debris of wreckage—easy and trivial successes, rotting carcasses of half-living failures, dead walls of impossibility, imperturbable circlings of the inevitable thread-mill, ridiculous, even grotesque shortcomings, there do appear somehow calmly expansive moments in which one gets a taste of immortality. And those moments I like.

I have little patience with those who say that the common-place is heroic, or that mediocrity is good. And I abhor those who whisper eulogies of the conquered because they have been conquered, and praise contented souls because they cannot know the heat and cold of desire.

The greatest thing in the world is victory, and the only note worth sounding is the pæan and the shout of triumph.

But as a kindly God has given it to us but rarely to know the real victory (though how often the real defeat), we have as a rule to content ourselves with the more assured reality of Strife. Nor need we think it hard to find in it a half content. For Strife, although so often barren, seldom loses the quickening sting of hope, and

has an equal joy in the cold intensity of the recluse and in the fierce hectic of the berserkir. Besides which, too, must of course be taken into account the necessities of food, drink and sleep, as well as the lovely things of nature and art which, though too often misapprehended by the cow-like, are really most excellent, in that they give us refreshment and rest. So that after all it's a fairly good game.

E. E. HALE, JR.

DON'T YOU MIND

(A BALLAD OF THEBA IMMABA.)

WE'RE marchin' 'cause we 'ave to, we are
marchin' to our death,
The road is 'ot and dusty an' we're gettin'
short o' breath;

The sweat a-runnin' in our eyes 'as made us nearly blind,
But these are only trifles, do n't you mind.

Chorus:

No! Teddy Watkiss does n't mind,
It would n't make no difference if 'e did!

'E's got to take 'is gun
('E thinks it's lots o' fun)

An' go an' do some shootin' 'cause 'e's bid!

We're goin' to give the 'eathen what nobody likes to get,
A round o' shriekin' bullets an' the ticklish bayonet.
O' course we must acknowledge that *our* greetin' is n't
kind;

No matter, they deserve it, do n't you mind.

Chorus.

It's one thing to be livin' an' another to be dead,
But there ain't much use in livin' if you've only 'arf a
'ead.

Therefore, take care the Matabeles do n't treat *your* knob
unkind;

'Owever, if you lose it, do n't you mind.

Chorus.

Ah! straight in front they 're waitin' an' the drums 'ave
ceased to roll.

There 's goin' to be a carcass 'ere an' there without a
soul!

An' if your brother Teddy, cold an' glassy-eyed, you
find,

Just say: "'E did 'is duty!" do n't you mind.

Chorus.

Wot 's that was said? "Go at 'em!" We 've 'ad orders,
so we must.

Hi! Hi! you bloomin' beggars, take a turn at eatin' dust!
But, Gawd! my left-'and comrade 'as a wound no man
can bind.

But Death will make 'is bandage, do n't you mind.

Chorus.

Another charge! a shock! a rush! The smoke 'as cleared
away.

Let's give a cheer to ease ourselves, go tell the band to
play!

A hundred naked pagans and some Christians 'ave resigned.
We 're marchin' back to barracks, an' do n't mind.

Chorus:

No! Teddy Watkiss does n't mind,

Although 'e might 'ave been one o' the slain.

'Owever, 'e 's a-givin'

This comfort to the livin':

"Be thankful you 've a chance to fight again!"

RALPH JOHNSON.



MR. BLISS CARMAN

DRAWN FROM LIFE BY DAWSON WATSON

CURIOUS PUNISHMENTS OF
BYGONE DAYS.

II

THE DUCKING-STOOL

THE ducking-stool seems to have been placed on the lowest and most contempt-bearing stage among English instruments of punishment. The pillory and stocks, the gibbet, and even the whipping-post, have seen many a noble victim, many a martyr. But I cannot think any save the most ignoble criminals ever sat in a ducking-stool. In all the degrading and cruel indignities offered the many political and religious offenders in England under the varying rules of both church and state, through the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the ducking-stool played no part and secured no victims. It was an engine of punishment specially assigned to scolding women; though sometimes kindred offenders, such as slanderers, "makebayts," "chyderers," brawlers, railers, and women of light carriage also suffered through it. Though gruff old Sam Johnson said to a gentle Quaker lady, "Madam, we have different modes of restraining evil—stocks for men, a ducking-stool for women, and a pound for beasts;" yet men as well as women-solds were punished by being set in the ducking-stool, and quarrelsome married couples were ducked tied back-to-back. The last person set in the Rugby ducking-stool was a brutal husband who had beaten his wife. Brewers of bad beer and bakers of bad bread were deemed of sufficiently degraded ethical standing to be ducked. Unruly paupers also were thus subdued.

That intelligent French traveller, Misson, who visited England about the year 1700, and who left in his descrip-

tions of his travels so much valuable and interesting information of the England of that day, gives this lucid description of a ducking-stool:

“The way of punishing scolding women is pleasant enough. They fasten an arm-chair to the end of two beams twelve or fifteen feet long, and parallel to each other, so that these two pieces of wood with their two ends embrace the chair, which hangs between them by a sort of axle, by which means it plays freely, and always remains in the natural horizontal position in which a chair should be, that a person may sit conveniently in it, whether you raise it or let it down. They set up a post on the bank of a pond or river, and over this post they lay, almost in equilibrio, the two pieces of wood, at one end of which the chair hangs just over the water. They place the woman in this chair and so plunge her into the water, as often as the sentence directs, in order to cool her immoderate heat.”

The adjectives pleasant and convenient as applied to a ducking-stool would scarcely have entered the mind of any one but a Frenchman. Still the chair itself was sometimes rudely ornamented. The Cambridge stool was carved with devils laying hold of scolds. Others were painted with devices such as a man and woman scolding. Two Plymouth ducking-stools still preserved are of wrought iron of good design. The Sandwich ducking-stool bore the motto:

“Of numbers ye tongue is worst or beste:
An yll tonge oft doth breede unreste.”

We read in Blackstone's Commentaries:

“A common scold may be indicted, and if convicted shall be sentenced to be placed in a certain engine of correction called the trebucket, castigatory, or ducking-stool.”

The trebuchet, or trebucket, was a stationary and simple form of a ducking-machine consisting of a short post set at the water's edge with a long beam resting on it like a see-saw; by a simple contrivance it could be swung round parallel to the bank, and the culprit tied in the chair affixed to one end. Then she could be swung out over the water and see-sawed up and down into the water. When this machine was not in use, it was secured to a stump or bolt in the ground by a padlock, because when left free it proved too tempting and convenient an opportunity for tormenting village children to duck each other.

A tumbrel, or scold's-cart, was a chair set on wheels and having very long wagon-shafts, with a rope attached to them about two feet from the end; it was also used for executing a ducking. It was wheeled into a pond backward, the long shafts were suddenly tilted up, and the scold sent down in a backward plunge into the water. When the ducking was accomplished, the tumbrel was drawn out of the water by the ropes. Collinson says in his *History of Somersetshire*, written in 1791: "In Shipton Mallet was anciently set up a tumbrel for the correction of unquiet women." Still other names for a like engine were gum-stool and coqueen-stool.

Many and manifold are the allusions to the ducking-stool in English literature. In a volume called *Miscellaneous Poems*, written by Benjamin West and published in 1780, is a descriptive poem entitled "The Ducking-stool," which runs thus:

"There stands, my friend, in yonder pool
An engine called the ducking-stool;
By legal power commanded down
The joy and terror of the town.
If jarring females kindle strife,

Give language foul, or lug the coif,
If noisy dames should once begin
To drive the house with horrid din,
Away, you cry, you'll grace the stool;
We'll teach you how your tongue to rule.
The fair offender fills the seat
In sullen pomp, profoundly great;
Down in the deep the stool descends,
But here, at first, we miss our ends;
She mounts again, and rages more
Than ever vixen did before.
So, throwing water on the fire
Will make it but burn up the higher.
If so, my friend, pray let her take
A second turn into the lake,
And, rather than your patience lose,
Thrice and again repeat the dose.
No brawling wives, no furious wenches,
No fire so hot but water quenches."

In Scotland "flyting queans" sat in ignominy in cucking-stools. Besse Spens was admonished: "Gif she be found flyteing with any neighbour, man or wife, and specially gains Jonet Arthe, she shall be put on the cuck-stule and sit there twenty-four hours." A worthless fellow, Sande Hay, "for troublance made upon Andro Watson, is discernit for his demerits to be put in the cuck-stule, there to remain till four hours after noon." The length of time of punishment—usually twenty-four hours—would plainly show there was no attendant ducking; and this cuck-stool, or cucking-stool, must not be confounded with the ducking-stool, which dated to the days of Edward the Confessor. The cuck-stool was simply a strong chair in which an offender was fastened,

thus to be hooted at or pelted by the mob. Sometimes, when placed on a tumbrel, it was used for ducking.

At the time of the colonization of America the ducking-stool was at the height of its English reign; and apparently the amiability of the lower classes was equally at ebb. The colonists brought their tempers to the new land, and they brought their ducking-stools. Many minor and some great historians of this country have called the ducking-stool a Puritan punishment. I have never found in the hundreds of pages of court records that I have examined a single entry of an execution of a ducking in any Puritan community; while in the "cavalier colonies," so called, in Virginia and the Carolinas, and in Pennsylvania, many duckings took place, and in law survived as long as the similar punishments in England.

In the Statute Books of Virginia from Dale's time onward many laws may be found designed to silence idle tongues by ducking. One reads :

"Whereas oftentimes many brabling women often slander and scandalize their neighbours, for which their poore husbands are often brought into chargeable and vexatious suits and cast in great damages, be it enacted that all women found guilty be sentenced to ducking."

Others, dated 1662, are most explicit:

"The court in every county shall cause to be set up near a Court House a Pillory, a pair of Stocks, a Whipping Post and a Ducking Stool in such place as they think convenient, which not being set up within six month after the date of this act the said Court shall be fined 5,000 lbs. of tobacco.

"In actions of slander caused by a man's wife, after judgment past for damages, the woman shall be punished by Ducking, and if the slander be such as the damages

shall be adjudged as above 500 lbs. of Tobacco, then the woman shall have ducking for every 500 lbs. of Tobacco adjudged against the husband if he refuse to pay the Tobacco."

The fee of a sheriff or constable for ducking was twenty pounds of tobacco.

The American Historical Record, Vol. I, gives a letter said to have been written to Governor Endicott, of Massachusetts, in 1634, by one Thomas Hartley, from Hungars Parish, Virginia. It gives a graphic description of a ducking-stool, and an account of a ducking in Virginia. I quote from it:

"The day afore yesterday at two of ye clock in ye afternoon I saw this punishment given to one Betsey, wife of John Tucker, who by ye violence of her tongue has made his house and ye neighborhood uncomfortable. She was taken to ye pond near where I am sojourning by ye officer who was joined by ye Magistrate and ye Minister Mr. Cotton who had frequently admonished her and a large number of People. They had a machine for ye purpose yt belongs to ye Parish, and which I was told had been so used three times this Summer. It is a platform with 4 small rollers or wheels and two up-right posts between which works a Lever by a Rope fastened to its shorter or heavier end. At ye end of ye longer arm is fixed a stool upon which sd Betsey was fastened by cords, her gown tied fast around her feete. The Machine was then moved up to ye edge of ye pond, ye Rope was slackened by ye officer and ye woman was allowed to go down under ye water for ye space of half a minute. Betsey had a stout stomach, and would not yield until she had allowed herself to be ducked 5 several times. At length she cried piteously, Let me go, Let me go, by Gods help I'll sin no more. Then they

drew back ye Machine, untied ye Ropes and let her walk home in her wetted clothes a hopefully penitent woman."

Bishop Meade, in his *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia*, tells of a "scolding quean" who was ordered to be ducked three times from the yard arms of a vessel lying in James River. A woman in Northampton County, Virginia, suffered a peculiarly degrading punishment for slander. In the lack of a ducking-stool she was "drawen ouer the Kings Creeke at the starne of a boate or Canoux, also the next Saboth day in the time of diuine seruise" was obliged to present herself before the minister and congregation, and acknowledge her fault and beg forgiveness. From the *Decisions of Virginia General Court*, now being printed by the Virginia Historical Society, we learn of one Margaret Jones that at a court held at "James-Citty" on the 12th of October, 1626, "for ye severall offences afore-named, of ye said Margaret Jones, yt Shee bee toughed or dragged at a boats Starne in ye River from ye shoare unto the *Margaret & John* and thence unto the shoare againe."

Toughed would seem a truly appropriate word for this ordeal. The provost marshal's fees decreed by this court at this time were ten shillings "for punishing any *man* by ducking."

In 1634 two women were sentenced to be either drawn from King's Creek "from one Cowpen to another at the starn of a boat or kanew," or to present themselves before the congregation and ask public forgiveness of each other and God.

In 1633 it was ordered that a ducking-stool be built in every county in Maryland, but I have no proof that they were ever used, though it is probable they were. At a court-baron at St. Clements, the county was prosecuted for not having one of these "public conveniences."

Half a century elapsed after the settlement of Massachusetts ere that commonwealth ordered a ducking-stool. On the 15th of May, 1672, while Richard Bellingham was Governor, the court at Massachusetts Bay passed this law:

"Whereas there is no expresse punishment by any law hitherto established affixed to the evill practise of sundry persons by exorbitancy of the tongue in rayling and scolding, it is therefore ordered, that all such persons convicted, before any Court or magistrate that hath proper cognizance of the cause for rayling or scolding, shal be gagged or sett in a ducking stoole & dipt ouer head & eares three times in some convenient place of fresh or salt water as the Court or magistrate shall judge meete."

Governor Bellingham's sister was a scold who suffered death as a witch.

John Dunton, writing from Boston in 1686, does not note the presence of a ducking-stool, but says:

"Scolds they gag and set them at their own Doors for certain hours together, for all comers and goers to gaze at; were this a Law in England and well executed it wou'd in a little Time prove an Effectual Remedy to cure the Noise that is in many Women's heads."

This was a law well-executed at the time in Scotland, though Dunton was ignorant of it.

There are no entries to show that this law authorizing ducking ever was executed in Massachusetts nor in Maine, where a dozen towns—Kittery, York and others—were fined for "having no coucking-stool." It was ordered on Long Island that every Court of Sessions should have a ducking-stool; but nothing exists in their records to prove that the order was ever executed, or any Long Island woman ducked; nor is there

proof that there was in New York city a ducking-stool, though orders were issued for one. A Lutheran minister of that city excused himself for striking a woman who angered him by her "scholding" because she was not punished by law therefor.

Pennsylvania, mild with the thees and thous of non-belligerent Quakers, did not escape scolding women. In 1708 the Common Council of Philadelphia ordered a ducking-stool to be built. In 1718 it was still lacking, and still desired, and still necessary.

"Whereas it has been frequently and often presented by several former Grand Jurys for this City the Necessity of a Ducking-stool and house of Correction for the just punishment of scolding Drunken Women, as well as divers other profligate and Unruly persons in this Town who are become a Publick Nuisance and disturbance to the Town in Generall, Therefore we the present Grand Jury Do Earnestly again present the same to the Court of Quarter Sessions for the City Desiring their Immediate Care That these Publick Conveniences may not be any Longer Delay'd but with all possible Speed provided for the Detention and Quieting such Disorderly Persons."

For several years later the magistrates clamored for a ducking-stool, and the following indictment was brought against an unruly woman:

"City of Philadelphia. We the grand Inquest for our Lord the King upon respective oaths and affirmations Do present that Mary wife of John Austin late of Philadelphia, Cordwainer, the twenty-ninth day of September and divers other days and times as well before as after in the High City Ward in the City afforsd within the Jurisdiction of this Court was and yet is a Common Scold And the Peace of our Lord the King a common

and publick Disturber, And Strife and Debate among her neighbours a Comon Sower and Mover To the Great Disturbance of the Leige Subjects of our sd Lord the King Inhabiting the City affords And to the Evill Example of other Such Cases Delinquents And also agt the Peace of our Lord the King his Crown and Dignity."

As late as 1824 a Philadelphia scold was sentenced by this same Court of Sessions to be ducked; but the punishment was not inflicted, as it was deemed obsolete, and contrary to the spirit of the time.

In 1777 a ducking-stool was ordered at the confluence of the Ohio and Monongahela rivers — and doubtless it was erected and used.

In the year 1811, at the Supreme Court at Milledgeville, Georgia, one "Miss Palmer," who, the account says, "seems to have been rather glib on the tongue," was indicted, tried, convicted and punished for scolding, by being publicly ducked in the Oconee River. The editor adds: "Numerous spectators attended the execution of the sentence." Eight years later the Grand Jury of Burke County, of the same state, presented Mary Cammell as "a common scold and disturber of the peaceable inhabitants of the County." The *Augusta Chronicle* says of this indictment:

"We do not know the *penalty*, or if there be any, attached to the offense of *scolding*; but for the information of our Burke neighbours we would inform them that the late lamented and distinguished Judge Early decided, some years since, when a modern Xantippe was brought before him, that she should undergo the *punishment of lustration*, by immersion three several times in the *Oconee*. Accordingly she was confined to the tail of a cart, and, accompanied by the hooting of a mob, conducted to the river, where she was publicly ducked, in conformity with

the sentence of the court. Should this punishment be accorded Mary Cammell, we hope, however, it may be attended with a more salutary effect than in the case we have just alluded to — the unruly subject of which, each time as she rose from the watery element, impiously exclaimed, with a ludicrous gravity of countenance, 'Glory to God.' "

It is doubtful whether these Georgia duckings were done with a regularly constructed ducking-stool; the cart was probably run down into the water.

One of the latest and certainly the most notorious sentences to ducking was that of Mrs. Anne Royall, of Washington, D. C., almost in our own day. This extraordinary woman had lived through an eventful career in love and adventure; she had been stolen by the Indians when a child, and kept by them fifteen years; then she was married to Captain Royall, and taught to read and write. She travelled much, and wrote several vituperatively amusing books. She settled down upon Washington society as editor of a newspaper called the *Washington Paul Pry*, and of another, the *Huntress*; and she soon terrorized the place. No one in public office was spared, either in personal or printed abuse, if any offense or neglect was given to her. A persistent lobbyist, she was shunned like the plague by all congressmen. John Quincy Adams called her an itinerant virago. She was arraigned as a common scold before Judge William Cranch, and he sentenced her to be ducked in the Potomac River. She was, however, released with a fine, and appears to us to-day to have been insane — possibly through over-humored temper.

ALICE MORSE EARLE.

CHARADES

I

ONCE I passed through my whole. 'Twas beautiful ;

'Twas like a fairy-land, so gay, so glad,
So free from care and sorrow. For a time
I staid. Yet eagerly desired the day
When I might leave its simple joys. Ah me,
If but I might return to them again!
My first is always in my whole. Sometimes
My first is in my last. When, long ago,
Red Riding-hood on kindly errand bent,
Walked to her grandam's cot across the wood,
My last was on my first.

II

My first, before the fray had ceased,
Offered my whole for my last beast.
Or Shakspeare tells us so at least.

III

My first is given and received, a blessing and a bane ;
You may buy it at the station, get it gratis on the train ;
You may find it in a puppet-booth or in a banquet-hall,
And I think, perhaps, the Roman is the noblest of them
all.

'Twas in my second, long ago, brave men put out to sea ;
And at a garden-fête I saw my second flowing free ;
And I leaned against my second, of strong and solid oak,
But as I grasped my second, alas, it dropped and broke.

My whole at Christmas seasons with holly we entwine ;
Upon the old Whig taverns 'twas painted as a sign ;
But in its depths lurk dangers, from its cakes of floating
ice
To its balmy breath of sugar-cane, its tropic fruits and
spice.

IV

In gorgeous splendor, once upon a time,
My second reigned in Afric's sunny clime ;
A slave provoked his monarch's royal ire,
And stood before him under sentence dire.
" My first, my last," he stammered, " pity me!
Must I obey thy horrible decree ?
Oh, thou who over millions hast control — "
One word the magnate uttered, 'twas my whole.

V

Upon a prancing steed the knight approached,
Plumed and bedecked. His ribbons gaily waved,
And in the breeze streamed out my last behind ;
Entering my whole, he called, " What, ho, within ! "
The lattice slowly opened, and with smiles
A maid appeared, to whom he paid my first.

CAROLYN WELLS.

•• The answers will be found at the end of the " Notes."



MR. H. G. WELLS

WHEN I say that Mr. Wells is the most notable of the younger English writers, and more notable than a good many of the older ones, I am ready to make good my words. There is no man in whom I have greater literary faith; no man from whom better work may be expected. To him more than to anyone else do I look for the cleansing of the English novel, for the effective damming of that stream of crude philosophy and cheap sentiment which has deluged English literature and drama for the last five years. It seems to me that Mr. Wells has it in him to write a really great novel; and I would not willingly risk my critical reputation by saying as much for any other writer. Mr. Anthony Hope has written several charming sketches and one capital story. He has thrown an atmosphere of brightness and sunlight round a London drawing-room. His humor dances in the sunlight. His characters bubble and glitter and flash gleams at you with iridescent volubility. The sparkle bewilders; the admirable setting — Mr. Hope is almost an artist in the way of *mise en scène* — deceives the eye; his St. Julien — it is really nothing more — tastes like the choicest Château Lafitte on the first and even the second draught. But examine more closely and the fascination disappears; the trick of the thing becomes evident and the lightness of touch is seen, at its true value, to be the result of a mere mental quickness. There is plenty in Mr. Hope to satisfy an idle hour — pleasing situations enough and an air of infectious gaiety, — but not enough strength in his abilities — so far as I can find — or flavor in his wit to promise any enduring success. Mr. Wells' wit is certainly on an indisputably higher plane than Mr. Hope's, less frolic-

some, less "clubable," if I may use the word, but more genuine in its source — for it comes from the heart and is directed by the head — and more universal in its application; in a word, truer. Mr. Hope tickles you with his feather; Mr. Wells pricks you keenly with his foil. As for the other popular writers of our day, it is an impertinence to compare Mr. Wells with them. He does not seek his public among the inmates of third-rate boarding-houses. In the flat pineland around Woking where he lives and writes, no kailyard is to be seen, not even the suggestion of a hill-top. Under these circumstances, you cannot expect a man who writes English grammatically to be a popular favorite. If Mr. Wells would only lead his readers through pools of sloppy English to a satisfactory attack on the Seventh Commandment; or write a dirty novel and put the Prince of Wales in it; or even sketch the Arcadian simplicity of a Parisian model — there would be some hope for him. Then you might have him rivaling Jumbo and Trilby. As it is, with no new religion to propound, no fresh scheme of philosophy to unfold, no Purpose, no Message, and nothing but wit, and fancy, and imagination, and a sense of style, and an instinct for story-telling, Mr. Wells is in a bad way. His duty lies clearly before him; the feeding hour has come; the boarding-house grows restive: some clamor for Scotch broth and get it; others for Irish stew — it comes; society hash, theological soup, pious pudding — a hundred hands are quick to serve them. Only Mr. Wells puts on his hat and walks out of the house.

Mr. Wells is only twenty-eight years old, short, well-built, a finely developed head with a striking forehead, bluish eyes that show traces of hard work, and a straggling moustache. He has had a remarkable career. His

father was a tradesman in a small and unprofitable way of business. Mr. Wells, I believe, was apprenticed to the business himself in his early years. He told me once that he had received no education up to the time he was eighteen. Then he educated himself; he studied in his off hours and took a science scholarship at South Kensington. He became a coach and interested himself generally in education. He was for a time the editor of the *Educational Times*, and still keeps a stern and watchful eye on the authorities at the London University. The incessant strain of these two professions broke down his health, never too robust; and after a severe illness he took to literature. There may not be much in all this to astonish an American. You have to know England well, you have to have felt its class restrictions and the iron hand of custom yourself to quite appreciate the pluck and endurance of a man — especially a man of the lower middle class — who educates himself out of the groove he was born in. I admire any man who performs the feat; and if he takes to writing books, I buy them at once and with confidence. Mr. Wells began his literary life by writing articles on chance subjects — fanciful, descriptive, humorous, according to the mood of the moment. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the brilliant editorship of Mr. Cust, was by far the most striking paper in London. Mr. Cust accepted the first article Mr. Wells sent in and refused no others. They soon became — at any rate to me — the most welcome feature in the paper. Mr. Wells started a character known as "My Uncle." The uncle was a philosophical man of the world and held forth with delightful ease and wit on the fads and fashions of the day — on drawing-room furniture, on musical at-homes, scorching bicyclists, the art of being photographed, and so on. They were

afterwards republished by Mr. John Lane under the title *Select Conversations with an Uncle*. The uncle became "extinct by marriage." "I stood by him," says his nephew, "to the end, and at last came the hour of parting. I grasped his hand in silence; silently he mastered a becoming emotion. And in silence he went from me unto the new life." He was a rare companion while he lived, with the keen, instinctive touch of another George Meredith. He was in fact another George Meredith, a Meredith in dressing-gown and slippers, giving idle escape to his whimsical fancies. One of the best things in the book is a vagary entitled "*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*." *La Belle Dame* is a musical young lady next door who practices all day long on the other side of the wall. "The business always begins with the slamming of a door and a healthy footfall across the room. The piano is opened . . . Then the music-stool creaks . . ." There is a moment of suspense while *La Belle Dame* chooses the music for the day. "I have a vision," he charmingly elaborates, "of the spirits of composers, small and great, standing up like suspects awaiting identification, while her eye ranges over them. Chopin tries to edge behind Wagner, a difficult and forbidding person, and Gounod seeks eclipse of Mendelssohn, who suddenly drops and crawls on all-fours between Gounod's legs; Sullivan cowers, and even Piccolomini's iron-framed nerves desert him. She extends her hand. There is a frantic rush to escape. . . A melancholy shriek. 'Do you hear, George? Tito Mattei is captured. A song.'" Thus does Mr. Wells dance round his subject, pelting it with diverting fancies, covering it with garlands of art and imagery.

While these articles were running through the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Mr. Wells was contributing a series of

short tales to the *Pall Mall Budget*, afterwards republished by Methuen & Co. under the title of *The Stolen Bacillus*. They have, most of them, a semi-scientific foundation. Two of them, *Æpyornis Island* and *The Lord of the Dynamo*, are among the very best short stories written in recent years. I know of nothing that Mr. Kipling has published which, in point of interest and humour, is above the level of *Æpyornis Island*; while Mr. Kipling's rugged, jerky style cannot compare for a moment with the ease and admirable precision of the younger writer. We should have to go to the land of Guy de Maupassant to find an adequate comparison.

Mr. Wells' first great bid for fame was made a little over a year ago when Messrs. Heinemann published *The Time Machine*, which attracted a good deal of notice, as it appeared serially in the *New Review*. The book was a decided success, something like 12,000 copies being rapidly sold. People began to wake up to the fact that Mr. Wells was a new force in English literature. The book surprised even those of us who had closely followed Mr. Wells' work. That it would show extraordinary cleverness and be admirably written we all knew. But we did not expect to find in it an imagination of the very first order, evenly sustained, never out of control, and shot through with gleams of a poetic fancy. The story is briefly this: A mathematician, conceiving time as a fourth dimension of space, invented a machine that will travel into the future. He arrived at the year 802,701 A.D. In the sunset of mankind he finds two distinct races — the Eloi, beautiful little beings, childlike, innocent, happy, idle, living still on the surface of the earth; and the Morlocks, the underground toilers, savage, brutal, hideous, working that the Eloi may do nothing. Their

wages are the flesh of their masters. Once every month, before the birth of the new moon, they come up to earth and attack the Eloi. Such as they capture they drag down to their subterranean caves and eat. The adventures of the Time Traveller among these people — the theft of his machine by the Morlocks, his visit to their haunts in search of it, and his fight with them in the burning forest — are full of breathless interest and incomparably told. And further on, when he has left the era of the Eloi and their slayers millions of years behind, there is a wonderful picture of the slow decay of the world in the twilight and night of time. It is free from any blemish of rhetoric; but it has all the eloquence and force which are born of the union of deep thought and imagination with simple expression and luminous diction. The book is not a polemic, nor is Mr. Wells a propagandist. He is simply a writer who happens also to be a student of science. But running through the man and his books is a vein of scientific socialism. It gives to *The Time Machine* an added worth and dignity. The book is brilliant merely as a story; but Mr. Wells has sown his pages — as does every really great writer, no matter what his subject may be — with those significant images and far-reaching suggestions which suddenly light up a whole range of distant thoughts and sympathies within us; which, in an instant, affect the sensibilities of men with a something new and unforeseen; which take them out of themselves and awaken the faculty and response of intellect and speculation.

Mr. Wells' next book, *The Wonderful Visit* (Macmillan & Co.), was in astonishing contrast to *The Time Machine*. It is a gay and charming phantasy, interwoven with wit that never degenerates and pathos that is natural and instinctive. And behind it all, showing its

face occasionally at the back of the stage, is a serious purpose, a resolute definable conviction, a sincerity which is a far more potent charm than either wit or pathos. The central figure in *The Wonderful Visit* is an angel who slips from his natural sphere and alights on a small Surrey village. The Vicar, an ornithologist in a small way, hearing of the arrival of this strange bird, goes out to "collect" it. He brings the angel down with a gunshot in the wing. The apologies of the Vicar and the mutual explanations are delicious. The angel is taken to the Vicar's house, dressed in the Vicar's new suit — his wings giving him the appearance of a hunchback — and installed at the vicarage. His presence causes some gossip; the curate's wife does not believe he is a man at all. His adventures in the village are told with an exquisite drollery which is irresistible. The village characters that cross the angelic path — from Lady Hammergallow and Crump, the doctor, down to the wayside tramp — are sketched with a humor, and a truth, that make English country life live before us. And the delightful portrait of the Vicar himself, not quite fossilised in his beliefs, suddenly awakened out of his own dull world by this angel's visit to dream of better and more beautiful things, is one that would have rejoiced Russell Lowell's heart. I like to think how much that genial writer would have loved this book. The standpoint of the two men is the same — you remember what Lowell says in his interesting introduction to the second series of the Bigelow Papers: "I had learned that the first requisite of good writing is to have an earnest and definite purpose, whether æsthetic or moral. . . . If I put on the cap and bells and made myself one of the court-fools of King Demos, it was less to make his majesty laugh than to win a passage to his roval ears for

certain serious things which I had deeply at heart." Mr. Wells could say the same of *The Wonderful Visit*. You should read it.

The last book Mr. Wells has written is *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (Stone & Kimball). It is rather a gruesome book, founded in idea on a possibility of science. Dr. Moreau is a vivisector who evolves semi-human beings out of animals and peoples his island with them. The story deals with the adventures of a man stranded on the island among these beasts. The narrative is horribly fascinating, a brilliant book of the Edgar Allan Poe-ish order. You walk, umbrellaless, in a pelting shower of horrors. No one can deny the cleverness and imaginative power of the work. On the whole, I do not think it so good a book as *The Time Machine*. It is less convincing for one thing — possibly because it approaches nearer to what might be — and for another, a surgical romance smacks too much of the dissecting room to be pleasant. Mr. Wells, of course, is too much of an artist to overburden his tale with a mere idea. His scientific speculations are never allowed to run away with him. It is simply that one resents seeing so much ingenuity and literary talent wasted on what is, after all, a mere *tour de force*. *The Time Machine* was one of the best examples of its kind of work that I know of. Mr. Wells ought to have rested content with it. I put *The Island of Dr. Moreau* aside as a mere incident in Mr. Wells' career, and look forward eagerly to his new book, *The Wheels of Chance*, a humorous bicycling tale of the middle classes, which Macmillan & Co. are to publish in the fall.

In himself, Mr. Wells is very much like his books — flashing in and out of many moods, and all of them delightful. In casual conversation you note the oddly

humorous twist of his ideas, the faculty of standing apart from the ordinary line of observation and looking at everything, at himself even, from a new point of view. That, I take it, is what he aims at in literature — to establish a new proportion, to show the world under a new aspect. The peculiar union in him of the scientific and literary temperaments gives him a rare advantage. He has what very few writers have, a stock of knowledge — hard, dry knowledge — to draw from. His ambition is to become the novelist of the lower middle class in England, to be a George Gissing with humour. He has every qualification for the task. He knows the ropes, he is intensely democratic in sentiment, and he has an eye for externals as quick as Dickens. He is a man to keep your eye on.

PICAROON.

“OF THE EARTH”

WHEN celestial tasks grow dull, perfection dreary,
Do the angels ever feel heaven-weary?
When a cherub or a seraph, less or more,
Seems as futile as a sand-grain on the shore?

ALICE KATHARINE FALLOWS.





¶ Some years ago, when I first heard of a dictionary of slang, it occurred to me that the compiler must be a man of unparalleled patience. The task seemed then a boundless one, and appeared to demand a street-corner experience which went ill with taste and literary judgment. Since that time there have been great changes; not only has the amount of slang increased to enormous proportions, so that the compiler of a new dictionary will have to face an almost appalling labour, but more significant still, it has now become literary. It is of course to be remembered, as the curious are constantly recalling to us, that much of our commonest slang to-day is of truly classic origin. With this fact in view, it is perhaps not so surprising that slang should become literary. Yet for many years it has undoubtedly been in a state of decadence. It has hardly been approved of, and was not commonly to be heard in careful society. This lack of appreciation of what was most individual and characteristic in our language has caused sorrow in many parts, and the recent artistic acceptance of the lingo of the streets is looked upon merely as a return to its proper function.

Curiously enough there has been much confusion about slang; it has had a limited life. Whatever has come to us from abroad has been called dialect: the talk of Mulvaney is dialect; Mr. Morrison's mean street characters speak continually in dialect; and such pleasing quotations as we have had of Coster London are always dialect, except, perhaps, when they are dignified into folk-lore. Yet the moment it is a question of New York or Chicago, rather than London, it becomes slang: with an English trade-mark, it could pass as literary; when the origin was American, it became at once vulgar and illiterate. Fashionable schools long since set their faces against it, and careful mothers taught their children to speak in approved mould, to carry on the antique copy-book forms, and bury deep what might have been distinct and commonplace.

With the popularity of the expressiveness of Mr. Chimmie Fadden, of entertaining memory, came a change, however, and since Mr. Townsend's hero first broke down the bars of convention, slang has been "on the rise." In truth it has gone so far—and it is going still farther—that it is high time for another article from Mr. Brander Matthews on Americanisms and Briticisms. To a certain extent, things are assuredly going his way, and differing conditions are beginning to count. We are becoming more American day by day. This in itself is neither a boast nor necessarily a matter for pride. Americanism is no better than Briticism, so far as is evident. Yet, being Americans, the fact that we are beginning to be individual, that the elemental things are showing, and that we are borrowing less and developing more, is undeniably excellent. If it were only for its share in this individualizing process, slang would be deserving of much recognition; but that is the least of its virtues; it is much more—it is amusing into the bargain.

A RIDDLE

QUESTION:

Three men near the flowing Thames,
Much pains and labour did they make,
They did both scratch and claw their wems,
Until their very hearts did ache.
It is as true as e'er was told,
Therefore this riddle now unfold.



ANSWER:

Three fiddlers in Thames Street, who played up a
bridegroom in the Morning, who gave them nothing to
drink.

From the "True Trial of Understanding."

¶ It is time for some one to write the great silver novel. It may not be known to Mr. Bryan and his managers that novels can be commissioned. Or it may not have come into their minds that they might hitch their wagon to the star of literature.

They will do well to consider the facts. A stirring story would be the most effective campaign document possible. The fight is as much one of emotion as of reason. If, as we are told, Mr. Bryan is a young Lincoln come out of the West, and if there is any truth in the metaphors of the new impiety, there is opportunity for a novel which shall be popular as nothing since *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has been. If the farmers of the west are indeed white (though begrimed) slaves, the best way to win sympathy for them is by a story. If a novel could be written, manly and sympathetic, and with no great sentimental surroundings, it would be difficult to predict how tremendous an effect it might have on the election.

These suggestions are not intended primarily for the political managers. I wished rather to call the attention of all young and aspiring writers to this, the opportunity of a lifetime. There is a chance for clever work to ride on the crest of a popular wave. Fame and fortune seem nearer than ever before. The name already acquired will not count; in short, it is the longed-for opportunity for a contest of merit alone. If something is not written it will be a sad waste of heavenly opportunity.

¶ Mr. Charles Dudley Warner has said a very sane word for criticism, and it has been copied far and wide. In effect, he said that real patriotism is measured as much by intelligent fault-finding as by extravagant acclaim of the first fruits of any native author. That is, the real lover of America should desire quality as much as quantity in its literature. Mr. Warner points his remarks

by referring to France, where criticism is an honored institution.

I think, on the whole, it is well that he did not refer to England, especially if criticism of fiction be a subject under consideration. It is possible that in a few isolated instances criticism in the English press is more keen and brilliant than in America. The *Saturday Review* for example, printed almost the only sane review ever written of *Jude the Obscure*. But any one who reads weekly newspaper reviews in the two countries knows that it is in England that praise is readiest for any mediocre novel. Read the *Athenaeum* and see the praise (lukewarm and wishy-washy, perhaps, but still praise) which it ladles out to every novelist who happens along. This attitude of the English papers is difficult to understand. Either it is one gigantic and universal case of log-rolling, or else the novel is still regarded as something undignified and a plaything for women. It is as if the novel were not quite worth while condemning, and as if there were a certain hedge of gentility round its author which precluded fault-finding.

Our own newspapers are not always intelligent, but they do not hesitate to condemn. The condition is better than that in England, and also better than Mr. Warner would seem to imply. We are not French newspaper critics, alas; but then, happily, we are not English critics either.

¶ At a music-hall the other evening I saw what the programme called a "trans-Atlantic second-sight man." His contrivances were old and his illusions were trite. I was disgusted with him and his whole performance until he came to the time-worn cabinet trick. Just before he was bound and placed in the box he stepped to the foot-lights and said:

"I call dis act de metamorphosis act because dat word means just what I do, bein' Greek. Meto means man and morphosis means disappear; hence watch de act close, gents, and see dat de ropes is tied tight."

¶ It occurs to me that some of the persons who spend their time complaining about the nude in art, and inventing indecency in statues and paintings when none is to be found, might do well to turn their attention to the advertisements of some of our shops. For several days the papers have been announcing an immodest exhibition, and it is time for these suppressors of vice to take action. The advertisement reads:

MEN'S PANTS

1-2 OFF!

COME TO THE BIG STORE AND
HAVE A LOOK AT THEM.

¶ There is a popular proverb which explains the origin of greatness in various classes of people. Mr. Richard Harding Davis may, perhaps, have had greatness thrust upon him, while in the line of achievement Mr. Hamlin Garland figures as a shining example. With Mrs. Aldin Chamberlain, however, there is no room to doubt that greatness came with birth. What is more, she knew it from early childhood, and by now she has come to appreciate fully the responsibility placed upon her.

In the preface to her "Life Thoughts" she says: "The first motive of the author in writing these poems has been the desire to make some use of the one talent graciously bestowed upon her by the Giver of all Good and Perfect Gifts." To start off with, the modest suggestion that her gift is both good and perfect is, in itself, refreshing: it is notable, too, that her incentive is not

open to a mercenary charge. She has a mission to fulfill on earth: she has a call which she seems to feel is divine, although a careful reading of her book would hardly justify one in agreeing with her. In truth, there is a touch of sacrilege in her implication of the Creator. But that is neither here nor there. She is a generous woman, actuated by the most charitable motives. She writes solely for the benefit of others. In these days of rapacious publishers most authors could reasonably make such a claim; but Mrs. Chamberlain, doubtless from a considerateness unusual in writers, has published her book herself.

Its full title is as follows :

LIFE THOUGHTS.

A Book of Poems on Religion, Love, Temperance, Kindness toward the Lower Animals; Then, Now (or Past and Present); Eternal Youth, The Brighter Side of Death, Hidden Worth, and various other subjects. It also contains Eulogistic Poems on

LOVELY CHARLEVOIX
and

BEAUTIFUL PETOSKEY.

There is something almost pathetic in the mental condition which could produce such a volume, and yet the variety in the subjects treated inspires only admiration and wonder. But to go "from bad to verse," as some one has said, at least one of Mrs. Chamberlain's compositions is worth quoting, punctuation and all:

THE FLY.

'Tis strange how stupid some folks are !

Why can 't they have more sense ?

Why will they hold the screen ajar,

To talk, when they go hence.

Do they not know they can be heard,
Right through a wire screen,
And that we need not miss a word
Of anything they mean ?

Oh, see ! My goodness ! there 's a fly !
I thought he 'd got in here !
He 's on the window, way up high !
There, now he comes quite near !

Oh ! get a cloth, and kill him quick,
For he is bound to fly ;
The sight of him most makes me sick ;
I long to see him die.

Oh, dear ! he 's got upon that cake,
And if I strike him there,
I will the pretty frosting break,
And spoil it for the fair.

Again he 's flying round the room,
To tantalize us so.
Perhaps I 'd kill him with the broom,
If I could out there go.

But if I open the screen door,
And pry the broom to get,
Why, then, I might let in one more,
To make more bother yet.

Oh, there ! I 've knocked him on the floor ;
I wonder if he 's dead.

Oh, no ! he spreads his wings to soar,
But I will on him tread.

Well, now you 've killed him, and I think
That you are very brave ;

You never let your courage shrink,
Till he was in the grave.

I think you 're brave enough to fight
A terror-stricken mouse,
If ever one should come in sight,
Of this fly-haunted house.

But you are tired almost to death,
A-tearing round the room ;
So now sit down and take your breath,
While I your courage boom.

But here 's a mouse ! Oh, hear her shriek !
She climbs into a chair,
Holds her skirts tight around her feet,
And thinks she 's safe up there.

The cat then came to her relief,
And did her life defend.
The struggle was so very brief,
My fun came to an end.

¶ Every Bureau of Advice to Writers has long told aspiring youth to avoid the literary essay as unsalable. Every aspiring youth has apparently taken the advice. Editors have so long wanted fiction rather than criticism, that now an editor who wants something besides stories cannot get it. This is exactly contrary to the popular opinion which is voiced by the Bureau of Advice. Everyone, it would say, can write essays, from graduating school-girls up and down. Essays are, consequently, a drug on the market.

That this is not so can be proved both in theory and fact.

To the fact. In the gathering of material for the **CHAP-BOOK**, nothing is more difficult to secure than the essay. Nothing is offered in smaller quantity nor of so

low an average quality. This in spite of the fact that editorial exigencies would induce one to be extraordinarily appreciative.

As to theory. I do not feel that I am forced to prove that a great critic is as great as a great story-teller or poet. It will always be the creative imagination that will most fill us with wonder. That a minor critic is quite as wonderful as a minor story-teller I do claim, however, and also that he is rarer.

The literary essay demands above all charm of style. One must be even more deft than in story-telling. And style is exactly what Young America has not. There are many people who are fond of reproaching the moderns with verbal dexterity in saying nothing. I should like to have some one of these people — Maurice Thompson would do well — furnish me a list of American writers who might properly be called stylists. If a half dozen can be found five of them will belong to the generation that is passing away.

Whatever they do in England and France, here we do not glorify manner over matter. In fact we do not glorify manner at all. This should fill Mr. Maurice Thompson with great delight and perennial hope in American literature. It does not so affect me. It is true that even if we tell our tales but indifferently, we may average up very fairly because we have good stories to tell, because we have much healthiness of spirit and a deal of natural vigor. But we should be on a much higher plane if we knew how to write as well as what to write.

¶ The answers to the CHARADES given on pages 364 and 365 are as follows: I. CHILDHOOD. II. KINGDOM. III. PUNCH-BOWL. IV. OBEY. V. COURTYARD.



MR. CLYDE FITCH.
THE CHAP-BOOK, September 15, 1906